

# Castlemaine Naturalist

April 2021

Vol. 46.3 #496

Monthly newsletter of the  
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.



White-browed Scrubwren photo by Noel Young

## CFNC ANNUAL REPORT for 2020/2021

The past year has been very different, although it started as usual with the 2020 AGM followed by our only face-to-face guest speaker for the 2020/21 year, Professor Susan Lawrence, whose talk on “Sludge – an Environmental History of the Gold Rush” revealed details of long term and continuing damage to our waterways. George Broadway stepped down as President after 3 years (his 4<sup>th</sup> stint in the role) and while the position of President remained vacant, Dianne Thomson was elected as Vice-President, Jenny Rolland as co-Editor with Noel Young to share the production of the newsletter, and Euan Moore as a general committee member. Geoff Harris continued as Treasurer, Peter Turner as Secretary, and Richard Piesse and George Broadway as general committee members. The next day saw our only excursion for the year, to the Botanical Gardens Nature Reserve, to hear from ecologist Karl Just about his ideas for the management plan he was preparing for Council – and to learn how many interesting plants are on the Reserve.

The April newsletter announced the cessation of our usual meetings, excursions and regular roadside cleanup sessions due to the Covid-19 restrictions, but since May we have held successful online meetings using Zoom, with good attendances including visitors from other clubs and groups. Euan Moore took us to the NZ sub-Antarctic islands in May; in June, Professor Phil Batterham described non-chemical solutions for controlling pest insects without damaging beneficial species. The importance of the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas, used by DELWP in planning controlled burns and other activities, was explained by Elizabeth Newton in July – we are now working towards using iNaturalist for reporting observations so relevant data can be forwarded to the VBA. In August Geoff Williams spoke about Platypus Conservation, while in September we were taken on a tour of Bhutan, learning about the amazing bird life and terrifying mountain roads from members Giles Daubeney and Nina Tsilikas. The final two speakers for 2020 covered contrasting approaches to restoring native species: Greg Kerr described the major effort, using large machines, to restore wetlands near Hamilton, while Noushka Reiter’s work on

conservation of threatened orchid species has involved challenging field, laboratory and glasshouse techniques. Ending the 2020/21 year, in February Peter Turner spoke about his 2018 trip to the Great Victoria Desert in WA – but the February excursion was a Covid casualty! A benefit of meeting online has been to hear from experts who may not normally be able to come to Castlemaine – we are grateful to all our guest speakers for contributing to a stimulating and informative program during 2020. Reports on all the presentations are available in the *Castlemaine Naturalist*.

While excursions were not possible, members were active observers in backyards and nearby bush, as seen in the Observations reported online during our meetings, with Euan Moore's assistance in displaying them. The *Castlemaine Naturalist*, prepared on alternate months by Noel and Jenny, has been a highlight each month, with reports on talks, George's analyses of 1940's *Wildlife* magazine, and members' observations. Members' Night in December on Zoom was highly successful, with a range of reports. With the easing of restrictions in November, the scheduled roadside cleanup was possible – and filled many bags with rubbish. We ended the 2020 with a Covid safe picnic in the Botanical Gardens, followed by a walk led by George Broadway to view a selection of the significant trees.

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Chris (Kit) Morris on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020, aged 90. Kit and Helen came to Castlemaine in 2005, and Kit was an active member of the club and the committee for many years. His contributions are summarised in the July newsletter. We miss his expertise on natural history, especially birds and his friendly advice.

The Council's weed control program benefits greatly through the dedicated work and expertise of Margaret Panter in identifying Needle Grass infestations on Council land. CFNC received \$5000 for 2020/21 for the contractor working with Margaret. Her team of volunteers, including CFNC members, continued the removal of Needle Grasses in the Botanical Gardens. The club has contributed to other conservation and environmental monitoring issues through support for the campaign against duck shooting, and inputs to the development of a management plan for Kalimna Park by Harley Douglas and the Dja Dja Wurrung team (as reported in the March 2020 newsletter). Members also assisted with monitoring Eltham Copper Butterfly populations in Kalimna. This year we hope to establish a long-term project to monitor the impacts of the controlled burn last year in Kalimna.

The committee has been supported in running the club through the dedicated work of Newsletter Distributer Geraldine Harris and Webmaster Ron Wescott. Geraldine also forwards emailed copies of the Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong FNC newsletters to interested members, and maintains the membership database. We have been updating sections of the CFNC website so Ron has been provided with changes as well as the monthly information about meetings. Recent improvements include Damian Kelly's revised Bird List, and Euan Moore's updates of the Butterfly pages. Frances Cincotta and Lesley Perkins have recently provided Ron with revisions to the *Castlemaine flora* web pages. Our thanks to all members who have assisted the committee in these ways.

While we will continue meeting online for the next few months, we can all hope that we can return to meeting at the Uniting Church room later in the year, as the

vaccination program and continued safe practices reduce the risks. Meanwhile, our individual and group natural history observations support our well-being and appreciation of our surroundings, and if recorded suitably contribute to long term monitoring of changes - for better or worse – in our precious environment.

- Peter Turner, Secretary

For the Committee

## **Guest Speaker: Reiner Richter – Dragonflies of Victoria.**

Euan Moore

Our March meeting (including our AGM) was attended by around 35 members and visitors via Zoom. Following the usual formalities of the AGM, Peter welcomed our guest speaker, Reiner Richter whose talk, 'Dragonflies of Victoria and Tasmania - Creating a new field guide', covered many aspects of dragonflies and damselflies (Family Odonata) as well as the lead-up to and publishing of his book

After a brief introduction Reiner gave a number of tips about dragonfly identification. It is the arrangement of the compound eyes which distinguishes the two main groups, damselflies (eyes widely spaced on opposite sides of the head) and dragonflies (eyes almost touching). The way the wings are held when resting, usually closed for damselflies and spreading for dragonflies is not reliable as there are exceptions in both directions.

It was trying to identify the dragonflies that he was seeing in the field that led Reiner to the realisation that there were limitations in the existing resources. The CSIRO 'Complete Field Guide to Dragonflies of Australia' is comprehensive but covers the whole continent with many species not found in Victoria or Tasmania. There were few other resources and none were comprehensive.

After developing a website about dragonflies, Reiner made contact with another entomologist, Ian Endersby, and together they decided to produce a book on the dragonflies of Victoria and Tasmania. This required many new photographs that would show key features for identification. After a lot of work, the book, 'Dragonflies and Damselflies of Victoria and Tasmania' was published in 2019. Reiner showed some example pages from the book and explained how they show the distribution and flight times based on actual records of the species, give a brief description of key features and useful information about their behaviour as observed by the authors. There are also several of Reiner's excellent photographs for each species.

Reiner then went on to discuss various considerations for identification in the field. There are often key markings that are consistent within a species while other markings and colour can change, particularly during the hours following metamorphosis. The colours of males and females may also differ. Habitat can also be useful in narrowing down the identification as some species prefer clear streams, others slow-flowing cloudy streams and yet others the still waters of swamps and marshes.

Prior to his talk, Reiner provided a checklist of the damselflies and dragonflies of central Victoria and the Grampians. This checklist may be used to further limit the

possibilities when using his book to come up with an identification. We plan to add this checklist to our website in the near future so that it is readily available for those who wish to use it.

Reiner's book has stimulated local interest in this large group of insects to the extent that a new species has since been reported for Victoria.

From my experience the best way to develop your interest in dragonflies is to start by photographing them. Use a camera with a telephoto lens (300-600mm equivalent) which will allow you to capture the necessary detail while still being 2-3m from your subject. Then make use of Reiner's book to identify your dragonfly and perhaps load it onto iNaturalist where the ID can be confirmed and your sighting will contribute to our knowledge of local dragonflies.

### **Want a copy of Reiner's book?**

The committee is organising a bulk order of 'Dragonflies and Damselflies of Victoria and Tasmania' by Reiner Richter and Ian Endersby (RRP \$42) at a reduced price (probably around \$30). If you are interested in obtaining a copy through our club please contact me at [calamanthus5@bigpond.com](mailto:calamanthus5@bigpond.com). I will get back to you to confirm the price once I know the number of people interested.



## **Tullaroop Reservoir on a wet Saturday Afternoon**

Peter Turner

Nine optimistic field naturalists and two visitors set out for Tullaroop Reservoir for the March 13<sup>th</sup> excursion – postponed from February – as gentle rain started. By the time we arrived at the picnic ground, where 3 members of Maryborough FNC were waiting, the rain has set in! Most of us continued on to the track marked Bucknall Church, which leads to the reservoir shore. We parked near the edge of a tree covered peninsula - the site of the early Rodborough School – also one of Ern Perkins' PhotoPoints. Julian Hollis outlined the complex geological history of the area, and we heard from our Maryborough colleagues something of the history of the Bucknall family, landholders since the 1840s, and the old bluestone church still used for family events.

Twelve species of waterbird were identified on the reservoir, including 12 Great Crested Grebe and a large flock of Masked Lapwing. It was too wet to look for some of the interesting plants along the shore, or to check for bush birds in the surrounding woodlands. So we called an early end to the visit.

The Bucknall family took up the Rodborough Vale leasehold of 23,400 acres in 1844, and purchased freehold rights over subsequent decades as the land was surveyed and sold by the Government. The history of the property and family makes interesting reading [1]. The core of the original property is still in family ownership.

Tullaroop Reservoir was constructed in 1958-59, excising a significant part of the Rodborough Vale property. Tullaroop Creek (originally Deep Creek) was badly affected by sludge from Clunes mining operations in early years. The reservoir provides water for Maryborough, and for irrigation. A 1980 report on the Tullaroop Reservoir catchment [2] includes some information on the geology, mining impacts, vegetation and land uses.

Tullaroop Reservoir has been visited regularly on CFNC outings – reports on excursions in the March 1987 and 1988 newsletters (available on our website) for example. We should try again, hoping for better weather and no Covid lockdowns!

[1] <http://www.bucknall.org.au/resources/A-Tour-of-Rodborough-Vale-Booklet-V4-Edition-2.pdf>

[2] [http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/nthcenregn.nsf/0d08cd6930912d1e4a2567d2002579cb/ceb584de29bd139eca25752800055d62/\\$FILE/Tullaroop.pdf](http://vro.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/nthcenregn.nsf/0d08cd6930912d1e4a2567d2002579cb/ceb584de29bd139eca25752800055d62/$FILE/Tullaroop.pdf)

## **Making a difference for the Swift Parrot and other declining woodland birds**

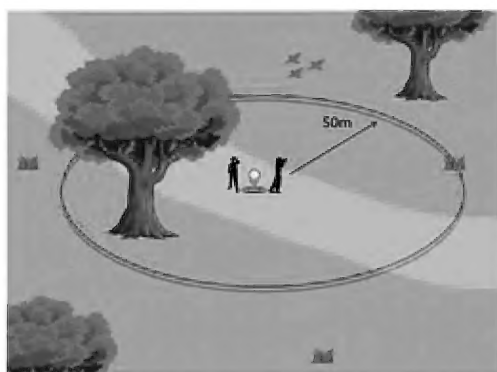
By Chris Timewell and Beau Meney, BirdLife Australia

Due to a range of historic and on-going threats since European colonisation, the migratory Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*) now finds itself on the brink of extinction in the wild. Although many of the challenges and opportunities for the species' recovery are in its Tasmanian breeding habitat, there is also much that can and is being done by governments, researchers, NGOs, community groups and individuals to improve the Swift Parrot's prospects within its winter foraging grounds across south-eastern mainland Australia – including the greater Castlemaine area.

A particular mainland challenge is the numerous critical knowledge gaps that are constraining the implementation of effective and timely conservation action. For example, there is not a clear explanation for the observed major geographic shifts in the Swift Parrot's winter habitat use over recent years. Similarly, we have an incomplete understanding of triggers for the species' movement patterns within and between seasons, their interactions with other species, and the variability in food availability over space and time. To an uncertain extent, most of these knowledge gaps appear to be directly or indirectly related to climate change.



We are extremely grateful to the many Castlemaine FNC members that have participated in the existing long-term biannual citizen-science monitoring program for Swift Parrots and Regent Honeyeaters. The data collected over many years – going back to the mid-1990s - continues to improve our understanding of the ecology of these species. However, the program was not designed to answer the new and pressing conservation questions with the level of accuracy and urgency now required. A revision to the monitoring program – termed **Swift Parrot Search** – has been specifically tailored to address these questions with an enhanced scientific rigour and repeatability. While it has a central focus on Swift Parrots, the new method is also expected to shed light on many of our ‘at risk’ woodland birds.



Rapid assessment: 5 minute - 50 metre radius search

- Presence of Swifties (incl. counts, behaviour, etc.)
- Counts for all other bird species present
- Flowering intensity of present eucalypts and mistletoe

Over recent months, ecologists from BirdLife Australia and Australian National University have established more than 1200 fixed-point monitoring sites on public land throughout the known and potential mainland range of the Swift Parrot. On-going efforts over the coming months will see approximately 1200 additional sites established before the end of 2021. Each monitoring location has a unique identification code, and comprises a circular 50 metre radius search area. The establishment process involves a site visit, habitat assessment, photos, map

production, tree and mistletoe identification and the development of instructions for access.

*Swift Parrot Search* is to be rolled out during 2021 and early 2022, and will progressively replace the existing monitoring approach. Volunteer birdwatchers will still be critical to the success of the revised program, and will be encouraged and supported to undertake the vast majority of the targeted surveys. Using a soon-to-be launched *Swift Parrot Search* portal within the Birddata database, volunteer birdwatchers will undertake a 5 minute search for Swift Parrots and any other birds present at each of these fixed locations. The availability of nectar and water is also to be estimated at each location. Although this survey can be undertaken at any time of year, volunteer birdwatchers will be particularly encouraged to collectively visit as many sites as feasible during biannual 6-week count periods. Hard-copy datasheets will also be made available for those seeking non-digital options for recording bird survey and habitat data in the field.

In 2021, the biannual monitoring periods are:

Round 1: Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June (roughly centred on the traditional 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in May)

Round 2: Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August (roughly centred on the traditional 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in August).



Chance sightings of Swift Parrots and other target species outside of the 5-minute point counts at the fixed locations are still keenly sought, but cannot be submitted as *Swift Parrot Search* surveys into Birddata. Instead, they can be separately lodged under *General Birddata Surveys*, or the details sent to us by email.

As central Victoria is one of the most important mainland regions for Swift Parrots, many monitoring locations have been established in this area already. This includes ~30 sites in the Muckleford woodlands encompassed between Castlemaine, Maldon and Newstead, and ~30 sites in the Sandon-Clydesdale area. Additional sites are intended to be progressively established over coming weeks and months. Although there is a good existing network of volunteers checking the local area for Swifties, additional searchers are welcomed. While our aim is to have each site checked at least once per survey period, it is also fine if a particular site is visited more than once. If you would like to participate in targeted surveys in the greater Castlemaine area, regional coordinator Beth Mellick can be contacted for guidance towards particular locations ([beth@wettenhall.org.au](mailto:beth@wettenhall.org.au)).

For those interested and able to explore the broader area, we also often find it harder to cover all the important areas further to the east (e.g., north and south of Heathcote, Costerfield-Graytown) and to the west (around Maryborough and westwards).

The full details, maps and access instructions for each of these locations will be viewable under the Shared Sites option through the Birddata website, and as part of volunteer user guides and other support material to be made available on the program-specific webpage (<https://birdlife.org.au/swift-parrot>). Also feel free get in touch with the Woodland Birds team at BirdLife Australia - ([woodlandbirds@birdlife.org.au](mailto:woodlandbirds@birdlife.org.au)).

The *Swift Parrot Search* option within the Birddata website will soon be available at <https://birddata.birdlife.org.au/record-survey>. This option will also be available through the Birddata app for both Apple and Android-system smart phones.

## **Birds of Sutton Grange March 2021**

Nigel Harland

Superb Fairywren	Red-browed Finch	White-browed Scrubwren
Australian Magpie	Australian Raven	Laughing Kookaburra
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Long-billed Corella
Crimson Rosella	New Holland Honeyeater	Welcome Swallow
Red Wattlebird	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Galah
Grey Shrikethrush	Red-rumped Parrot	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Striated Pardalote	Spotted Pardalote	Pied Currawong

Not much unusual this month with the exception of the Pied Currawong. These are common around Castlemaine, but rarely seen on this side of the highway. No birds of prey this month either.

## April Observations (1943)

### George Broadway

What the readers of "Wildlife" magazine had observed in April 1943. Do Field Nats find the same specimens today? Firstly a report on the recently discovered cave of aboriginal rock art which had been called the Brimgower Cave, which name was later changed to "Cave of Fishes". Again the war was barely mentioned with the exception of a note explaining that the monthly photographic competition had had to be suspended because of the shortage of photographic material. And so to readers' specimens...

#### Insects

Oakleigh: a beetle whose food is mainly other insects. Its name is *Trogodendron*, and it appears to not have a common name as yet. As it feeds on insect pests it may be regarded as useful. The body is dark grey to black, sculptured in little pits with little velvety tuft at the front end of each wing case and near the tail end, a broad band of velvety black bounded by narrow bands of white. The most notable feature is the antennae which are bright yellow and are waved about incessantly whenever the beetle is on the move. Although they can give a powerful nip they are not dangerous.

Manangatang: Large black cricket-grasshopper, (Unnamed). One of the partly carnivorous members of the grasshopper clan. Found only singly and not a pest like some of the rels.

Koonwarra: Rhinoceros Beetle *Bolboceras* July '16

Yallourn: Eggs of the Lacewing Fly. Each egg is placed on the end of a long stalk apparently to protect it from some of the tiny insects which are egg parasites. (It has also been suggested that this is a device to protect each egg from its siblings.)

Bentleigh: Front end of one of the large Ghost Moths, *Trictena atripalpis*. which fly at night and often fall victim to night-hunting birds or insectivorous mammals. Evidently the nutritious abdomen of your specimen had become a meal for one such creature. The larvae live in wood and are very destructive. Sep '16

Oakleigh: The quaint little white insect was an immature leaf hopper. Unlike insects which undergo a complete metamorphosis from the larval stage, these young resemble the parents and the young stages are called nymphs. They undergo a series of moults as they grow until the final moult when the wings appear. Feeds on the sap of plants and is harmless.

Horsham: Wattle Goat Moth, one of the largest Victorian moths with a body as large as a mouse. The larva is a wood-borer.

St Arnaud: Fiddler Beetle: Sometimes instead of the strange blue-green lines on the back, there is a similar pattern of yellow lines. They are leaf eaters, harmless, but sometimes a nuisance in orchards. June '18

Sandringham: Mole cricket making a foray above ground for a change. They mostly live below ground feeding on the roots of plants. Mar '20

#### Spiders

Lang Lang: The Little Spiny Spider *Gasteracantha minax*. Has been mentioned frequently previously. Body about 1 cm across, wider than long, with spikes on the back. Body smooth and glossy and marked with a mosaic of yellow cream and black. Many may be found together in a communal web. Oct '16

Drysdale: Spider too far gone to be identified but seemed to be a Wolf Spider, *Lycosa*. It lives in a hole in the ground, usually without a lid; if a lid is made it is rough, not as neat as that of a trapdoor spider. Eggs are laid in a silken cocoon which is kept in the burrow, but is carried with her when she goes out. When camping one time with the bird Observers we found at



night that there were many such burrows and by shining a torch into the hole there could be seen the shining eyes of the spider residents. Mar '20

Moonee Ponds: Orb spinning or Garden Spider *Epeira diademata* called also "Queen of the night". They spin their geometrical webs at sundown, at dawn the spider gathers up the remnants and reabsorbs the organic material to remake silk material. Also Geelong and East Geelong.

Caulfield: Orchard or Bird-dropping spider, *Celaenia excavata*. Does not snare its prey in a web. Feeds at night and probably lures its victims by exuding a scent similar to that of a female moth. See May '17 Also Sunshine, Natya and Devon North.

Carnegie: Large Satin Nephila Spider, or Golden web spider. Large strong web: at this time of year many may be found in the bush. June '17

Merino: Light brown *Isopeda*, one of the so-called Triantelopes, common throughout the Australian bush. The "home" was a cocoon containing eggs. These spiders lurk under bark where they may spin a few strands of web for protection. They don't build webs as snares, they instead rely on stealth and speed.

## General

Wonthaggi: The eggs were lizard eggs, you never find the eggs of the echidna buried in the ground. Echidna lays one egg at a time and transfers it immediately to her pouch.

Also your other specimen, *Ibacus*, or Prawn Killer, a flat leaf-like crustacean which feeds upon other crustaceans. They are also known as "Slipper Lobsters" one of which is the Balmain Bug.

Oakleigh: Eggs of one of the small lizards, probably a skink. The eggs are buried, the ground skillfully rearranged to cover any signs of digging, then the mother leaves them to their own devices.

(Unidentified): *Gordius Worm*, Commonly called the Horsehair Worm because it is so long and thin. In its youth it is parasitic on water beetles. A very lowly form of life.

## New FOBIF guide to Native Peas

This guide, Native Peas of the Mount Alexander Region, offers detailed notes on 30 different native peas found in the bushlands of north central Victoria. Written in plain language and generously illustrated, it offers readers a way into a little known part of our natural environment.

The book is published by Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests in association with Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club and the Wettenhall Environment Trust. It follows our successful guides to eucalypts, wattles and mosses. There's a general introduction, detailed species notes (including on weed species), and a section on names. Although based on species found in north central Victoria, it would be useful to anyone interested in flora of the box ironbark region.

Available from Stoneman's Bookshop, the Tourist Information Centre in Castlemaine, the Enviroshop in Newstead and the Book Wolf in Maldon. You can also buy the book and cards directly from FOBIF. Go to <http://www.fobif.org.au> and click on the Native Pea book and cards images on the right hand side of the home page for purchase details. The Recommended Retail Price for the book is \$10. Sets of cards are \$20.



## April Guest Speaker

### Jess Lawton, Connecting Country

#### Fabulous Phascogales: survival in a modified landscape

If you live in or around Castlemaine, you may have been lucky enough to encounter the elusive Brush-tailed Phascogale, or Tuan. This medium-sized marsupial has a large, black, bottlebrush tail and is listed as 'threatened' in Victoria. We'll hear from Connecting Country's Jess Lawton on the biology and ecology of the Brush-tailed Phascogale, her research on the occurrence of this species in a modified environment, and how you can help this threatened species to persist. The meeting will be held by Zoom (details on the back page).



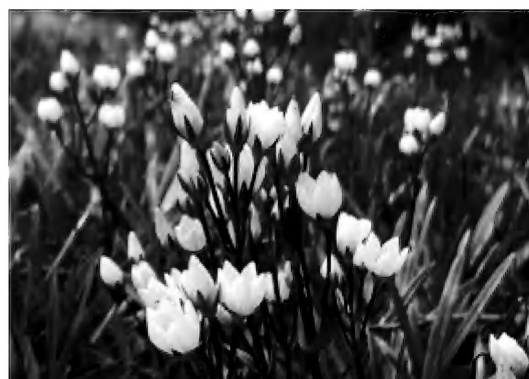
Photo – Jess Lawton

## Observations

Geoff Park, on his blog on March 26, has reported his first seasonal sighting of a **Swift Parrot** in Newstead, and **Blue-winged Parrots** on the plains.



Photo observations from the meeting – clockwise from top left. 1. *Chlorocoma dichloraria*, exquisite green moth rescued from inside our fire box. Jill Williams; 2. This damselfly was active at Tullaroop Reservoir on 4<sup>th</sup> March. It was found in the ephemeral vegetation where there is periodic inundation. Red and Blue Damsel, *Xanthagrion erythroneurum*. Euan Moore; 3. Mueller's Snow-gentians *Chionogentias muelleriana* subsp. *Alpestris* taken on Baw Baw ski run No 1 on March 3, Geraldine Harris; 4. Swimming Echidna, via Kerrie Jennings (neighbor).



## From your Committee

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the AGM on March 12th, all nominations for office bearers and committee members were appointed to the 2021/22 committee. Two new committee members, Cathrine Harboe-Ree and Jill Williams were warmly welcomed and the valuable contribution of retiring committee member Richard Piesse was acknowledged gratefully.

President: Peter Turner  
Vice-President: Euan Moore  
Secretary: Jenny Rolland  
Treasurer: Geoff Harris  
Newsletter Co-Editors: Noel Young and Jenny Rolland  
Committee: George Broadway,  
Cathrine Harboe-Ree,  
Jill Williams,  
Dianne Thomson

### MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE

Membership subscriptions for 2021/22 are now due. Your completed membership form (available from the CFNC website) can be mailed with cheque to the Treasurer, or completed with details of direct payment into the CFNC account (details on the renewal form), or scanned and mailed or emailed to [castlemainefnc@hotmail.com](mailto:castlemainefnc@hotmail.com)

### **April Excursion, Saturday 10 April Phascogale nest box monitoring, Yandoit Leaders: Jess Lawton, Jenny Rolland**

Connecting Country has set 150 nest boxes to provide habitat for the Brush-tailed Phascogale through the Mount Alexander Shire. The boxes are monitored every two years, and volunteers are being sought to assist with continuing this important collection of data on the species' occurrence. For our April excursion, we will join Jess in checking nest boxes at a property in Yandoit. Jess will explain the monitoring process and discuss how landscape attributes influence Phascogale occurrence.

**Meet** at the Octopus car park opposite the Castle Motel, Duke Street for departure at 1.30pm.

**Bring** sunhat, block-out, hand sanitiser, water and wear stout walking shoes. Also bring your own afternoon tea for the end of the excursion.

Please **comply** with current Government COVID-safe requirements on the day.

The Field Trip will be cancelled in extreme weather conditions.

**Disclaimer:** The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the club

# Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club

## COMING EVENTS

Monthly meetings will continue to be held on-line via ZOOM until further notice, commencing at 7.30pm. If you have registered for our previous webinar meetings you will be sent the link for registering with Zoom. If you have not joined before and wish to attend, please email Peter Turner at [munrods1@inet.net.au](mailto:munrods1@inet.net.au)

Our guest speaker will follow the usual 'observations' session when members can share recent interesting sightings with an option to show a photo or two. If you have photos to be shown please email JPEG file(s) to Euan Moore at [calamantus5@bigpond.com](mailto:calamantus5@bigpond.com) by Noon on the day of the meeting.

Excursions will be held this year (subject to any changes in COVID restrictions) on the Saturday after the monthly meeting. Meet at the Octopus (opposite the motel in Duke St) for departure at 1.30pm unless otherwise advised.

**Fri Apr 9 Meeting:** Speaker - Jess Lawton (Connecting Country) 'Fabulous Phascogales: survival in a modified landscape'

**Sat Apr 10 Excursion:** Yandoit, 'Phascogale nest box monitoring' with Jess Lawton

**Fri May 14 Meeting:** Speaker - Geoff Williams (Platypus Conservancy) 'Rakali'

**Sat May 15 morning Excursion:** Campbells Creek, 'Rakali and platypus habitat' with Geoff Williams

**Fri Jun 11 Meeting:** Speaker Julie Radford (Bush Heritage) 'Seeds of Resilience'

**Business meetings** - third Thursday of each month.

**Club website** (Web master: Ron Wescott) - <http://castlemainefnc.wordpress.com/>

**Castlemaine Naturalist** - email newsletter material to: [newsletter.cfnc@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.cfnc@gmail.com)

\*Deadline for the May edition is 30<sup>th</sup> of April.

## Subscriptions for 2021

Ordinary membership: Single \$35, Family \$50

Pensioner or student: Single \$25, Family \$30

Subscription includes postage of the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist

## 2021 Committee

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